Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005

# Message Text

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 01 STOCKH 04136 211533Z

64
ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03 SS-20

USIA-15 ACDA-19 IO-14 OMB-01 DRC-01 /138 W
---------- 051861
R 211445Z NOV 73
FM AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1036
INFO AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN
AMEMBASSY HELSINKI
AMEMBASSY OSLO
AMEMBASSY REYKJAVIK

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE STOCKHOLM 4136

E.O.11652: N/A
TAGS: PINT SW
SUBJECT: POSSIBLE CENTER-LIBERAL MERGER SHELVED

1. FOLLOWING POST-ELECTION LULL IN SEPTEMBER-OCTOBER, SWEDISH POLITICS ARE NOW ACTIVE, WITH TWO BLOCS CAUTIOUSLY TESTING THE WATER AS THEY CONTEMPLATE IMPENDING 175-175 DEADLOCK IN THE SWEDISH PARLIAMENT (RIKSDAG). AT CENTER STAGE FOR PASTTWO WEEKS HAS BEEN DISCUSSION AT PARTY-LEADER LEVEL OF A POSSIBLE MERGER OF CENTER AND LIBERAL PARTIES. IF THERE WERE NO SIGNIFICANT RANK-AND-FILE DEFECTION, THE MERGER WOULD PRODUCE A MIDDLE PARTY REPRESENTING APPROX. 35 P/C OF ELECTORATE, SECOND ONLY TO SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC PARTY.

2. LIBERAL LEADER GUNNAR HELEN, CASTING ABOUT FOR WAYS TO REPAIR FORTUNES OF A PARTY GRAVELY WEAKENED BY ITS SEPTEMBER ELECTION LOSSES, BEGAN IN EARLY NOVEMBER TO DISCUSS POSSIBILITY OF MERGER WITH THE GROWING CENTER PARTY. HE HAD SEVERAL MEETINGS WITH CENTER LEADER THORBJORN FALLDIN, WHO DECLARED HIMSELF CONDITIONALLY
LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 02 STOCKH 04136 211533Z

IN FAVOR OF A MERGER DESPITE CONSIDERABLE MISGIVINGS IN

Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005

Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005

CENTER RANKS, ESPECIALLY IN THE YOUTH ORGANIZATION.
AT A CENTER PARTY COUNCIL MEETING ON NOVEMBER 19 FALLDIN
WAS UNEXPECTEDLY REBUFFED. THE COUNCIL DECLINED TO
AUTHORIZE FALLIDIN TO OFFER MERGER TERMS TO THE LIBERALS;
INSTEAD IT SHELVED THE PROJECT AT LEAST UNTIL NEXT SUMMER
BY DIRECTING CENTER PARTY LOCAL ORGANIZATIONS TO STUDY
THE PROJECT. AFTER COUNCIL MEETING FALLDIN TALKED VAGUELY
OF A TIMETABLE THAT WOULD POSSIBLY BRING FORTH A MERGER
IN TIME FOR THE SCHEDULED 1976 ELECTION.

3. CENTER DECISION TO DELAY WAS DISAPPOINTING TO HELEN,
BUT IT SAVES HIM A DIVISIVE STRUGGLE IN HIS OWN PARTY.
MANY LIBERALS OPPOSE THE MERGER BECAUSE THEY SEE IT AS
"THE CAT GOBBLING UP THE CANARY." NOW HELEN CAN EXPLORE
OTHER POSSIBILITIES, SUCH AS SOME KIND OF COOPERATION
WITH THE SOCIAL DEMOCRATS IN THE NEW RIKSDAG WHICH CON-
VENES IN JANUARY. IF THE LIBERAL PARTY INTENDS TO
REBUILD RATHER THAN DISAPPEAR IN A MERGER, IT MUST TRY
TO GET BACK THE VOTES IT LOST TO THE CENTER PARTY, AND
THUS MOVE AWAY FROM COOPERATION WITH THE CENTER PARTY.

4. THE LARGE LIBERAL PRESS IS CHARACTERIZING THE SHELVING
OF A QUICK CENTER-LIBERAL MERGER AS A MAJOR DEFEAT FOR
FALLDIN. THEY ASSERT THAT IT DEMONSTRATES HIS LACK OF
CONTROL OF HIS OWN PARTY. FURTHER, THEY CRITICIZE
FALLDIN FOR NOT COMING FORTH STRONGLY AND DRAMATCALLY
AFTER HIS ELECTION VICTORY TO ASSERT A POSITION AS PALME'S
PEER. MOST COMMENTATORS ARE AGREED THAT PALME HAS
REGAINED THE INITIATIVE IN SWEDISH POLITICS.

COMMENT: FALLDIN'S RELUCTANCE TO ATTEMPT TO EXPLOIT
IMMEDIATELY HIS NEW EMINENCE IN SWEDISH POLITICS HAS
DISAPPOINTED THE BOURGEOIS PRESS, THE MODERATE PARTY
AND A GOOD MANY SWEDES WHO WOULD LIKE TO SEE A SHOWDOWN
BOURGEOIS-SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC BATTLE IN 1974. CHARACTER-
ISTICALLY, CENTER LEADER SEEMS BENT ON MAKING HASTE
SLOWLY AND MAY WELL BE MAKING HIS STRATEGIC DECISIONS ON
THE EXPECTATION OF NOW ELECTION UNTIL 1976.
WHETHER OR NOT HE INITATED THE MERGER TALKS (AS
LIBERAL PARTY CLAIMS), FALLDIN'S AIM WAS CLEARLY TO
LIMITED OFFICIAL USE



SWALLOW THE LIBERAL PARTY, NOT MERGE WITH IT. WHILE HE
MAY HAVE BEEN TAKEN ABACK BY THE EXTENT OF RESISTANCE
IN CENTER PARTY QUARTERS TO ANY TYPE OF MERGER, THE
PARTY COUNCIL'S REBUFF HAS NOT ENDANGERED HIS POSITION
AS PARTY LEADER.
THE UPSHOT OF THE HELEN-FALLDIN AFFAIR WOULD SEEM
TO BE: (A) TO WEAKEN BOURGEOIS-BLOC UNITY AND THEREBY
TO REDUCE CHANCES OF THE OPPOSITION FORCING A NATIONAL

Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005

Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005

ELECTION IN 1974, AND (B) TO IMPROVE PALME'S PERSPECTIVES
TO PLAY DIVIDE-AND-RULE POLITICS WITH THE OPPOSITION AND
THEREBY TO KEEP THE SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC SHOP OF STATE ON
EVEN KEEL.
OLSEN

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

NNN

Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005

Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005

# Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptioning:** X
**Capture Date:** 01 JAN 1994
**Channel Indicators:** n/a
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED
**Concepts:** n/a
**Control Number:** n/a
**Copy:** SINGLE
**Draft Date:** 21 NOV 1973
**Decaption Date:** 01 JAN 1960
**Decaption Note:**
**Disposition Action:** RELEASED
**Disposition Approved on Date:**
**Disposition Authority:** martinml
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a
**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW
**Disposition Date:** 28 MAY 2004
**Disposition Event:**
**Disposition History:** n/a
**Disposition Reason:**
**Disposition Remarks:**
**Document Number:** 1973STOCKH04136
**Document Source:** CORE
**Document Unique ID:** 00
**Drafter:** n/a
**Enclosure:** n/a
**Executive Order:** N/A
**Errors:** N/A
**Film Number:** n/a
**From:** STOCKHOLM
**Handling Restrictions:** n/a
**Image Path:**
**ISecure:** 1
**Legacy Key:** link1973/newtext/t19731119/aaaaanjr.tel
**Line Count:** 120
**Locator:** TEXT ON-LINE
**Office:** ACTION EUR
**Original Classification:** LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
**Original Handling Restrictions:** n/a
**Original Previous Classification:** n/a
**Original Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a
**Page Count:** 3
**Previous Channel Indicators:**
**Previous Classification:** LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
**Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a
**Reference:** n/a
**Review Action:** RELEASED, APPROVED
**Review Authority:** martinml
**Review Comment:** n/a
**Review Content Flags:**
**Review Date:** 13 SEP 2001
**Review Event:**
**Review Exemptions:** n/a
**Review History:** RELEASED <13-Sep-2001 by freemaal>; APPROVED <13-Sep-2001 by martinml>
**Review Markings:**

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

**Review Media Identifier:**
**Review Referrals:** n/a
**Review Release Date:** n/a
**Review Release Event:** n/a
**Review Transfer Date:**
**Review Withdrawn Fields:** n/a
**Secure:** OPEN
**Status:** NATIVE
**Subject:** POSSIBLE CENTER-LIBERAL MERGER SHELVED
**TAGS:** PINT, SW
**To:** STATE
**Type:** TE
**Markings:** Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005

Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005